

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 1-7. Claim 1 has been amended to better define the invention and to remove reference numerals. In addition, claims 2-7 have been amended to reference numerals, and the specification has been amended to insert headings as requested by the Examiner. Support for the claims may be found, *inter alia*, in the disclosure at pages 4-5 and FIG. 3.

Reconsideration is expressly requested.

The specification was objected to as lacking proper headings. In response, Applicant has amended the specification to insert such headings. It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing amendment overcomes the objection to the specification, and it is respectfully requested that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

Claims 1-7 were rejected as being anticipated by Dour et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5,517,916.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth in claim 1 as amended, Applicant's invention provides a self-inking hand stamp wherein, *inter alia*, a receiving compartment for keeping available at least one further ink pad is provided in an actuating bow and the at least one further ink pad includes means which cooperate with associated means on the walls of the housing or on the side walls of the actuating bow, respectively, to secure the at least one further ink pad in position. In this way, Applicant's invention provides a self-inking hand stamp which permits rapid and easy insertion of a new ink pad when the inking capacity of its ink pad abates without requiring particular efforts for furnishing the same.

Dour et al. teaches a self-inking hand stamp of a well-known kind which has been discussed in Applicant's disclosure at page 1. The embodiment shown in FIG. 10 of *Dour et al.* provides for frame member 301, an operating member 305, a removable tray 312 and a detachable cover 306b, wherein a surface 360 of the operating member 305 and the cover 306b confine a hollow space, which will be referred to hereinafter as cavity 360, 306b.

Dour et al., however, nowhere discloses or suggests that cavity 360, 306b is a receiving compartment for keeping available at least one further ink pad. It is respectfully submitted that it would be merely speculative and without support from the description of *Dour et al.* to presume that cavity 360, 306b could serve as a receiving compartment for accommodating a spare ink pad. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that *Dour et al.* fails

to disclose or suggest a self-inking hand stamp having a receiving compartment for keeping available at least one further ink pad as recited in Applicant's claim 1 as amended.

Moreover, *Dour et al.* fails to disclose or suggest a hand stamp with at least one further ink pad for quick replacement of a used-up or malfunctioning primary ink pad as recited in claim 1 as amended. Therefore, even if one could insert a replacement ink pad in the cavity 360, 306b of *Dour et al.*, there would be no motivation to actually do so. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that *Dour et al.* cannot render Applicant's self-inking hand stamp as recited in claim 1 as amended obvious.

Furthermore, providing a hand stamp arranged to include a replacement ink pad within the actuating bow required special adaptations of conventional hand stamps to be made. It is

necessary to change the design of common self-inking hand stamps. In particular, it is required to enlarge the structural height of the actuating bow as discussed at page 2 of Applicant's disclosure. In contrast, the stamp according to *Dour et al.* is entirely unsuitable for accommodating a spare ink pad as can be seen from FIG. 12 of *Dour et al.* An ink pad 412 of the shown dimensions in *Dour et al.* would certainly not fit into the cavity 360, 306b considering the inclined arrangement of the side walls of cover 306b.

Applicant's claim 1 as amended includes the further recitation of securing means for securing the positioning of a replacement ink pad 18 in the receiving compartment 17. Applicant's self-inking hand stamp as recited in claim 1 provides for means 18' and associated means on the walls 12 (which may be seen from FIG. 3 of Applicant's disclosure) of the housing 2, or

on the side walls of the actuating bow 3. In contrast, *Dour et al.* fails to disclose or suggest such securing means for securing a replacement ink pad in cavity 360, 306b. Hence, even if a spare ink pad could be included within cavity 360, 306b of *Dour et al.* - - though impractical in view of FIG. 10, as discussed above - - the further ink pad could not be securely positioned thereto in *Dour et al.*'s arrangement. Thus, if the cover 306b were to be removed from *Dour et al.*, the spare ink pad could fall down, causing soiling and/or becoming soiled itself or becoming lost.

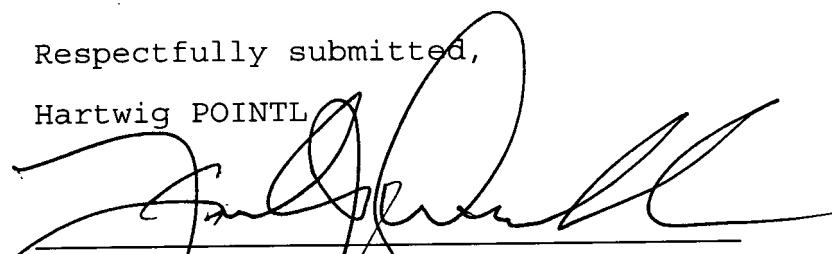
Because *Dour et al.* fails to even address the issue of replacement ink pads, it is respectfully submitted that nothing in *Dour et al.* can render obvious Applicant's self-inking hand stamp in which the actuating bow has a receiving compartment for at least one further ink pad including means which cooperate with

associated means on the walls of the housing or on the side walls of the actuating bow, respectively, to secure the at least one further ink pad in its position. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 as amended is patentable over *Dour et al.*, together with claims 2-7 which depend directly or indirectly thereon.

In summary, claims 1-7 have been amended along with the specification. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this application be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Hartwig POINTL

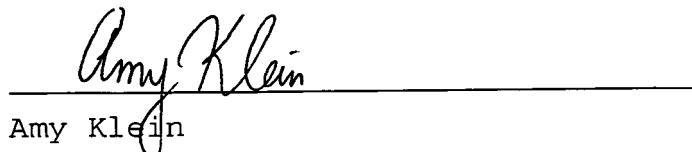


Frederick J. Dorchak, Reg. No. 29,298
Edward R. Freedman, Reg. No. 26,048
Attorneys for Applicant

COLLARD & ROE, P.C.
1077 Northern Boulevard
Roslyn, New York 11576
(516) 365-9802

FJD:cmm

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Amy Klein